

A Word of Advice by **Luddleston**

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Summary:

Geralt has a problem. Unlike most problems, it cannot be handled by killing it.

Unfortunately, the only person he has to advise him on unkillable problems is Jaskier.

A Word of Advice

Author's Note:

This is born of my opinion that Geralt would take a hundred monsters over having to deal with feelings about a person.

Unless, that person is Ciri, in which case he's fighting a hundred monsters anyways.

There were so many things in life that were irritating to deal with, especially when one's profession involved getting rid of things that irritated other people into hiring a professional. And, therefore, because he *was* a professional and did not need to hire one, Geralt had determined that on the whole, he had to deal with all of his problems without expecting a single ounce of outside help. Especially when said problems were snarling and had very large teeth and oozed something that reportedly smelled terrible. Geralt wouldn't know. He'd gotten used to it, himself.

Problems that stole chickens or children or whatever else in the night were easy enough to deal with. They had specific weaknesses that generations of witchers before Geralt had written down in thick, boring books that would save your life when you had to remember whether silver or iron would be more effective against today's terror. There were carefully crafted potions that would give him enough of an edge that he usually didn't nearly get himself killed, and when he did nearly get himself killed, his own biology managed to patch him up better than most surgeons could. (Unless of course, he was nearly decapitated and had to spend far too long in a temple with Nenneke tutting at him as if *he* were the problem, rather than the near-decapitator.)

People were problems of a different sort.

Most of the time, the people Geralt met were attempting to do one of three thing: pay him, kill him, or fuck him. Occasionally, they were also trying to run away from him, but that was usually followed by trying the second item on that list.

Sometimes, people were trying to do more than one of the three. See: the townspeople who had asked him to get rid of whatever was devouring their sheep in the night, who would be mostly nonplussed if it managed to kill Geralt as well (because then they wouldn't have to do item number one, and pay him anything). Once, someone had tried to do all three, and now Geralt couldn't show his face within a mile of Blaviken.

Jaskier spent most of his time trying to kill Geralt by slowly annoying him to death.

This was why Geralt hated, absolutely hated, willingly taking a seat next to Jaskier in the tavern, where, thankfully, Jaskier had yet to turn a crowded room into a concert. He nearly dropped his lute when Geralt joined him, scowling like he was daring Jaskier to say a single word.

"Evening, Geralt. What brings you up here? I would have thought you'd be down at the stables, spending some quality time with your best and only friend, Roach." Jaskier could not be glared into silence. Someday, Geralt would learn this.

Today was not that day, and so he continued to frown. "Maybe I should. Quieter than you."

"Most things are quieter than me." Jaskier was not wrong. "Fine by me, I'm told I'm very pleasant to listen to."

He could argue with that. It would make Jaskier even louder though, so Geralt summed up his disbelief like so: "hm."

The one good thing about Jaskier was that he would summon drinks from somewhere, preventing Geralt from having to get them himself. He would also lord Geralt's reputation over the stunned barkeep—"*don't you know? This is the famed White Wolf, Geralt of Rivia, can you believe he didn't recognize you, Geralt?*"—which had about a fifty-fifty chance of getting them better drinks or getting them removed forcibly from the bar. Lately, it was starting to lean more in the direction of better drinks. Maybe those ballads were doing something.

Or maybe the barkeep had heard about a very loud, annoying bard, and had decided that things would be better all 'round if everyone was drunk.

"You look like you wish to ask me something." Jaskier said, once they were settled back into their cramped little table in the corner.

Fuck. If Geralt had to get saddled with a 'traveling companion,' he would've wished it was somebody less perceptive. He said nothing, which, apparently, was enough of an answer.

"Is it how I get my hair to look this lovely all the time? I'll tell you the secret. I wash it more than twice a year. You might try it." Jaskier leaned back until his chair hit the wall, taking a drink of his ale, frowning at it, and trading it out for his lute instead.

"I wash it." Geralt didn't so much as speak to him as he did growl in Jaskier's general direction.

"Scrubbing monster bits out with no soap does not count." Jaskier absently strummed his lute, a warning sign that he may begin singing.

If asked, Geralt would say that he only spoke to prevent the singing from happening. "I. May need your—" here, he groaned, like if he spit out the last word it would damn him for eternity, "—help."

The strumming stopped.

Geralt took a very long drink and did not look at Jaskier.

"What?"

"Won't say it again."

"You don't have to, I, I just—whatever could you need *my* help for? Wait. Let me guess."

"Not my hair."

"Damn, that comprised most of my first three guesses." He rubbed his chin, far too deep in thought over what had been the most obscure of requests. Maybe Geralt shouldn't have asked. Jaskier was clearly just as much of an idiot as he'd always been. His eyes lit up then, too bright. "Wait. It's that sorceress."

Not enough of an idiot, it seemed. Geralt continued to drink, continued to not look at Jaskier, and continued to be silent.

It was as much of a confirmation as anybody could get out of Geralt, and it was as much of a confirmation as Jaskier needed. "Geralt, no," he whined, "she's clearly bad news. We *both* almost died the first time we met her."

"You almost died before that," Geralt corrected him. "She made sure you didn't." He didn't mention that he almost died the first time he'd met a lot of people. He didn't need to.

"Yes, but still—wait, why do you need my help? The two of you seemed to be getting on just fine." The look in Jaskier's eyes suddenly resembled that of a bloodhound who'd caught a scent. In Jaskier's case, the scent was gossip.

Geralt didn't miscalculate often, but he realized that he'd just made the worst possible decision. Why would anyone ask Jaskier for advice on anything? "Right. You're right. I don't. I'm going to check on Roach." He stood, ready to turn and run when Jaskier, because he had an unconventional sense of decorum that only existed when he needed to impress someone, lunged across the table and seized his arm, knocking over a drink in the process.

"Tell me, right now!" he ordered, like a child demanding to know what they were about to be given for their birthday.

"Fuck off." Geralt attempted to shake him loose, but Jaskier was attached to him like a barnacle on the bottom of a boat, and if Geralt shoved at him any harder, he worried he'd injure him somehow. "You'll just write another song about it."

"Exactly!"

Somehow, Jaskier managed to wrestle Geralt back into his seat. It was less wrestling and more persistent clinging until Geralt finally gave in because the older men at the table to their right had forgotten their game of gwent in lieu of watching whatever spectacle Geralt and Jaskier were providing.

"If you don't tell me, I'll just make it up."

Geralt had learned, after the many times he'd refused to give Jaskier details, that this was not an empty threat. A disturbing number of people who apparently *listened* to whatever lyrical bullshit came out of Jaskier's mouth now had incorrect ideas about how to ward off at least three different monsters. Geralt had started giving Jaskier more information on how to properly kill things. He wasn't sure how this had affected the music, because he tried not to listen too hard.

He'd gotten the worst of Jaskier's songs stuck in his head for three weeks. Three. Weeks.

Geralt sighed again, and picked up Jaskier's drink, because his own had been knocked over in the struggle. He drank all of it, while Jaskier continued to make childish noises of protest and do nothing about it. Payment for Geralt being forced to admit to what he was slowly becoming more sure had been a huge fucking mistake.

Jaskier, because he wasn't capable of waiting patiently for however long it would take Geralt to answer him (possibly until the inevitable end of the universe), started strumming his lute again, leaning back in his chair casually like he had all the time in the world.

Geralt considered running again. If he moved fast enough, Jaskier couldn't stop him. But he was a persistent little shit, and he'd catch up to Geralt eventually, and even though he forgot any number of things on a given day, such as the fact that the woman he was singing to amorously was already married, he wouldn't forget that Geralt was holding out on *details*. Fucking *details*.

"Made a wish. The djinn thing."

"As I recall, you made three of them," Jaskier said, glancing down at Geralt's wrist, where the scars from the occasion were nearly faded into nothingness. On an ordinary human, they would still be red wounds.

"The last one. It was..." he really wished Jaskier hadn't knocked over his drink. He wanted another one. Or three. "She was dying. I wished that I wouldn't lose her. Or something. Can't remember."

Jaskier leaned forward, hanging onto every word, like he was trying to determine which ones would make the best lyrics.

"Gonna run into her again. I can feel it. That's—that's all I know."

"Alright." Jaskier set his lute on the chair next to him and put his elbows on the table, steepling his fingers like he was an astute professor observing a scientific experiment. "So. Here's what we do next time we see her."

He waited long enough that Geralt had to say, "what."

As Jaskier relayed his secret plan, his voice lowered such that a normal man wouldn't hear him. Geralt wished he couldn't hear Jaskier either, because the secret plan was incredibly stupid. "We get the fuck out of wherever we are, as fast as humanly—or witcherly—possible."

"That's it?"

"That's it," Jaskier said. "Many times, have I made a mistake regarding a romantic paramour—"

Geralt snorted at him. Making mistakes regarding romantic paramours was Jaskier's primary occupation; musical performance was a hobby in comparison.

"No, stop that. I'm telling you, the best way to avoid a problem like that is to ignore it entirely. Don't talk to her, don't look at her, don't even put yourself in the same room as her. Got it?"

"Sure." He did feel strangely lighter. He wasn't sure if it was because he'd managed to gesture to the inkeeper for another drink, or because Jaskier's advice was working. Maybe it was just the fact that he'd finally told someone what the hell was going on in his head. He should try that more often.

"I'm serious!"

"I said 'sure'."

Jaskier leaned back in his chair again, sighing over-romantically at the ceiling. "I can't believe that you've come to me, asking for my sage advice. After so many long years of friendship—"

"Known you for four months."

"—finally, you accept my counsel on matters of the heart—"

"Just said 'sure'."

"—because one day, Geralt, you will find true love—"

"Uh-huh." His next drink arrived and he stopped listening to Jaskier in favor of downing about half of it.

"—and I will be there to ensure that moment is remembered for generations!"

"Please don't."

"A song of the ages!"

"Doubtful."

"A ballad like such the world has never heard!"

The men playing gwent stopped again to observe.

"A love so true and beautiful that—Geralt! Come back! Are you actually going to see Roach instead of remaining in my company? Geralt!"

He tossed enough payment for his drinks, minus the one that Jaskier had spilled, onto the counter and walked out the door, without turning around to see Jaskier attempt to chase after him. He was absolutely going to see Roach. She probably had better advice.

The next time they saw Yennefer was in a similar tavern, except this time, Jaskier was staring at two Zerrikanian warriors and Geralt was being persuaded to join a dragon hunt.

Jaskier, clearly remembering his brilliant plan, scrambled up and attempted to leave as soon as he caught sight of Yen, stammering something that Geralt did not hear, because he was busy ignoring the only piece of advice he'd asked for in recent memory. He probably should have listened. He probably shouldn't have asked in the first place.

He probably shouldn't have fallen for something a thousand times more dangerous than any dragon.

But Jaskier would tell him that himself while he complained the whole damn time.

Author's Note:

If you would also like to talk about how Jaskier gives bad advice and Yennefer is the Good Scary, I am on tumblr/twitter/pillowfort as @luddlestons